

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5762

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP (ABOUREZK, JAMES)

SUBJECT: CODEL SCHEDULE BEIRUT

REF: STATE 245513

1. FOLLOWING IS SUGGESTED TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR CODEL VISIT
BEIRUT, COORDINATED WITH CLOVIS MAKSOUD:

(A) THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27

1755 - ARRIVE BEIRUT VIA PA-002. EMBASSY CONTROL OFFICER
CAROLAN AND MR. MAKSOUD TO MEET CODEL AT PLANESDIE AND ESCORT
TO PHOENICIA HOTEL.

EVENING - PRIVATE DINNER FOR CODEL HOSTED BY MAKSOUD.

(B) FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28

MORNING - CALLS ON SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT AND AT FOREIGN
MINISTRY, PLUS BRIEFING ON AREA ENERGY MATTERS AT OFFICES OF MIDDLE
EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY.

AFTERNOON - WORKING LUNCHEON AT AMBASUADOR'S RESIDENCE, IFOLLOWED
BY MEETING WITH UNRWA DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GENERAL (AT LATTER'S
REQUEST).

EVENING - DINNER HOSTED BY KAMEL ASSAD, SPEAKER IOF PARLIAMENT.
(SEE PARA 2 BELOW.)

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(C) SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

MORNING AND AFTERNOON - TRIP TO SOUTH LEBANON, ARRANGED BY MAKSOUD.

EVENING - PRIVATE XINNER HOSTED BY SHAYKH KHALIL AL KHOURY, GUESTS TO INCLUDE SEVERAL LEXANESE POLITICAL FIGURES KNOWN TO SENATOR. (WE UNDERSTAND SUCH GOL CRITICS AS RAYMOND EDDE, AN NAHAR PUBLISHER GHASSAN TUEINI, AND OTHERS WILL BE PRESENT AT THIS OR OTHER FUNCTIONS ARRANGED BY MAKSOUD.)

(C) SUNDAQ, DECEMBER 30

MORNING - VIUIT TO ANTIQUITY SITE AT BAALBEK, ACCOMPANIED BY MAKSOUD.

AFTERNOON - LUNCH AT CHTOURA, AFTER WHICH CODEL TO PROCEED TO DAMASCUS BY CAR.

2. FYI. (A) DUE TO STIFF COMPETITION FOR HONOR OF HOSTING EVENTS FOR AND OF MEETING WITH SENATOR, AND TO PROBLEM INHERENT IN HAVING MAKSOUD ARRANGE PART OF PROGRAM, A CONFLICT HAS ACISEN FOR DINNER EVENING OF DEC. 28. MAKSOUD HAD TOLD CONTROL OFFICER SEVERAL DAYS AGO THAT LOCAL PUBLIC RELATIONS MAGNATE SAMIR SOUKI HAD OFFERED TO HAVE DINCER FMR SENATOR ON DEC. 28. CONTROL OFFICER TOLF VAKSOUD WE HOPED THAT PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSEVBLY AND NUMBER TWO MAN IN GOL, KAMEL ASSAD, WOULD HOST DINNER AND THEREFORE WE WOULD APPRECIATE MAKSOUD AND SOUKI HOLDING OFF ON DEFINITE COMMITMENT. WHEN DEFINITE INVITATION FROM ASSAD ARRIVEDION DEC. 21, CONTROL OFFICER DISCOVERED THAT UNBEKNOWNST TO US (AND ALSO UNBEKNOWNST TO MAKSOUD, WHO IS QUITE UPSET) SOUKI HAD CONTACTED SENATOR BY PHONE AND RECEIVED APPROVAL TO SEND OUT INVITATIONS FOR DINNER EVENING OF DEC. 28.

(B) AS SENATOR'S SCHEDULE PRESENTLQ STANDS, HE WILL BE MEETING WITH OR ENTERTAINED BY SEVERAL PROMINENT LEBANESE WHO FIGURE IN EYES OF PRESENT REGIME AS OPPONENTS OR AT LEAST SEVERE CRITICS (E.G., MAKSOUD HIMSELF; KHALIL KHOURY; AN NAHAR'S GHASSAN TUENI AND OTHERS). WHILE SOUKI IS NOT IN THIS CATEGORY, NEITHER IS HE SEEN AS SUPPORTER OF REGIME. MOREOVER, KAMEL ASSAD IS MAN WITH CONSIDERABLE SENSITIVITY TO WHAT APPEAR TO BE SLIGHTS TO HIS POSITION OR PREROGATIVES. NON-ACCEPTANCE BY SENATOR OF INVITATION WHICH EMBASSY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAS SOLICITED WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY ANGER ASSAD AND BE SEEN AS MAJOR DISCOURTESY, OR WOSE, BY ASSAD AND PROBABLY PRESIDENT FRANGIE. THIS WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE SINCE IT COMES AT TIME OF LARGE-SCALE INTERNAL UNREST AND OPPOSITION TO GOL (SEE SEPTTEL) AND AT PERIOD WHEN WE ARE ABOUT TO CHANGE AMBASSADORS. MOREOVER, GOL WOULD PROBABLY HAVE DIFFICULTY IN DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE BRANCH WHEN IT COMES TO SENATOR'S SCHEDULE.

(C) FOR ABOVE REASONS, WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND DEPT. URGENTLY
CONTACT SENATOR OR SOMEONE FROM HIS STAFF, EXPLAIN PROBLEM, AND
SUGGEST THAT SENATOR TELEPHONE OR CABLE SOUKI REGRETTING THAT
CONFUSION HERE HAS LED TO DUPLICATION IN HIS SCHEDULE AND STATING
HE FEELS OBLIGED TO ACCEPT ONE AND ONLY OFFICIAL INVITATION EXTEN-
DED, IN ABSENCE OF PRES. FRANGIE (BEIRUT 13986), BY NUMBER TWO
RANKING FIGURE IN GOL, KAMEL ASSAD. IF DEPT. THINKS IT NECESSARY,
SENATOR'S OFFICE COULD TELL SOUKI THAT RECOMMENDATION TO THIS
EFFECT HAS COME FROM EMBASSY BEIRUT.
BUFFUM

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